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A GUIDE FOR TEACHER USE WAS PREPARED FOR AN EIGHTH-GRADE LITERATURE CURRICULUM. THE SUGGESTED CURRICULUM WAS DESIGNED TO DEVELOP AN ANALYTICAL APPROACH TO LITERATURE WHICH WOULD APPEAL TO EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENTS. BACKGROUND DISCUSSIONS RELATED TO ANALYSIS OF PLOT, FORM, AND VIEWPOINT WERE PRESENTED. EXPLANATIONS, STUDY QUESTIONS, AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES (GRADED LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY) WERE INCLUDED FOR UNITS ON LITERATURE REORIENTATION, TRAVEL LITERATURE, AND NARRATIVE POETRY. AN ACCOMPANYING GUIDE WAS PREPARED FOR STUDENT USE (ED 010 141). (WW)

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OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

# LITERATURE REORIENTATION
# TRAVEL LITERATURE
# NARRATIVE POETRY

**Literature Curriculum II**
**Teacher Version**

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# OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

## REORIENTATION UNIT

## Literature Curriculum II

## Teacher Version

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## Introduction

The primary task for teachers of English is to help students enjoy reading. If the students discover that their own experiences can be intensified, clarified, and broadened by literature, they will have learned the most important thing that any literature curriculum can give them. With this end in view, the teacher must first choose selections that will appeal to students of a particular age group and second, aid their understanding of what they read by making them aware of aspects of a literary work which contribute to its effectiveness but which may escape attention unless an analytical approach is adopted. Of course, the analysis should be subsequent to the response, since literature, unlike mathematics, is designed to affect the reader emotionally, as well as intellectually. But in turn, the analysis should help to clarify the response and permit it to become a subject for reflection.

Accordingly, we need some method of analysis that will be accessible to eighth graders. It is right to begin with the students' response to a particular work, but they should then be asked to account for its effect by means of a three-fold analytical approach.

The first step is to inquire what the poem, story, or essay is about. In asking this question concerning any piece of literature, it at once becomes evident that the complete answer will probably have two levels: one will describe the outer subject; the other, the inner subject or theme. If it is a story that is being analyzed, the plot line (what happens) would on one level be what the story is about; but students will soon come to see that the story also tells us some truth that we may call the real or inner subject of the story. Hence, the approach through Subject will inevitably lead to the crucial question of the underlying theme of the story or poem. In other words, the concrete or sensuous terms of the work imply an abstract or spiritual meaning. Yet the two must be one, because good literature can hardly result from the combining of two disparate understandings of truth. Even allegory fails unless there is some real amalgam of the two levels of meaning. For eighth graders, the discovery that a poem or story means more than it says in direct terms could lead them to an awareness of the other dimension of meaning in their own lives. For example, such a poem as "The Shell" by James Stephens simply cannot be grasped on the literal level. What the poem is about is not the contrasting sounds of a sea shell and a cart but the whole cluster of associations for which these tangibles stand. An understanding of symbol or metaphor is fundamental to answering any questions about the subject of a piece of literature, Thus the analytical approach through questions dealing with subject can do a great deal not only to assist comprehension but also to strengthen and clarify the students' response.

The second analytical approach is through Form. Included in this concept are all the choice which the writer makes, either consciously

or unconsciously, in order to present his subject most effectively. For eighth grade discussion, the most basic choice governing the form of a literary work is between story and non-story. We consider that the writer who has something to say may choose to say it either in narrative or discursive form. This difference, rather than the seventh grade distinction between prose and verse will lead the students to an awareness that stories may be told either in prose or verse and equally, non-storied material may be put into prose or verse. They have, after all, already seen that both "Bishop Hatto" and "Rip Van Winkle" tell stories and that neither "Loveliest of Trees" nor "The Genuine Mexican Plug" tells a story. Thus the distinction between storied and non-storied is not really new to them but will now be used to explore some problems of form in more depth. Briefly, this distinction concerns the formal pattern governing the large-scale organization of the work. If the primary organizing principle is a plot line, we call the work storied; if the primary organizing principle is something else--question-answer, classification, comparison; in fact, any logical, as distinct from chronolocial organizing principle--then it is considered non-storied. Because most children prefer plotted works, these predominate in the curriculum, but because they also come to enjoy essays, lyrics, and other non-storied types, some of these are also included.

But the analysis of form includes all the other decisions that any writer has to make. For the most part decisions about genre, imagery, meter, and other aspects of form, are made unconsciously; yet the students need to learn what contributions are made to the presentation of a theme by these formal decisions. In emphasizing that each choice is dictated by what the writer wants to say, it will become evident that the subject in its most profound sense determines the form of a work. Instead of viewing the form as a mold into which the subject is poured; it should be seen as the shape which best communicates the writer's meaning.

The third analytical approach is concerned with Point of View. If we interpret this term as not only the angle of narration but also the writer's attitude to his subject, it is clear that questions about point of view will often get to the heart of the writer's meaning. Frank O'Connor tells how many times he rewrote one of his stories, trying to make it say what he wanted it to say, and finally, he discovered that what it needed was a shift in point of view from third person to first person. Obviously, one cannot generalize about the best point of view for any piece of fiction; the theme alone can determine it. Students should be shown that who tells the story is important and that it is not necessarily the author who is speaking if it is a first person narrative.

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This unit has two parts. The first, shorter part is intended as a

review of our analytical approaches. It consists of two poems, one storied, the other non-storied, to emphasize this particular distinction. Following this review of the basic principles, more extensive treatment of storied and non-storied forms is given by means of a ballad, a group of lyric poems, a short story, and an essay.

Note: In the exercises, the more difficult questions are marked with an an asterisk, and may be omitted in discussion with weaker students.

## PART I

1. William Oldys, "On a Fly Drinking Out of His Cup", in Immortal Poems, p. 186.

Explication

This poem should remind the students of "Loveliest of Tress", which they read in the seventh grade. But Oldys varies the carpe diem theme by letting an unappealing creature, the fly, instead of the usual lovely flowers remind him of the brevity of life. It seems that the poet is almost refusing to indulge in the mood of regret that pervades "Loveliest of Trees"; rather, he lets his wry sense of humor speak in the invitation to the fly to drink from his cup.

Study Questions

1. What real life incident suggests the subject of the poem to the poet? -- A fly is drinking out of his cup.

2. What is the subject? Does it remind you of the subject of any other poem that you have read?--The brevity of life theme may remind students of their reading of "Loveliest of Trees" in the seventh grade.

3. Does this poem differ in the way it treats the subject from other poems with the same general meaning?--The fly is as fitting a symbol for the brevity of life as the blossoms on a cherry tree, but of course most carpe diem poems use beautiful things in order to intensify the yearning for life and regret over its fleetingness.

4. Why has the speaker put himself on a level with the fly? What about a mouse or a spider?--The fly is a traditional symbol of the shortness of life; it also, traditionally, is a symbol of low, vile life, from its association with filth. At the same time, it is a winged creature and has, on occasion and in a negative sense, been a symbol of the human soul. (See Theodore Roethke's poem "In a Dark Time": "My soul like some heat-maddened fly...."; or John Donne's poem "The Canonization": "Call her one, me another fly....") In this particular poem, the poet has

deliberately humble himself by putting himself on a level with the fly, but he has perhaps suddenly seen the need for humbling himself and ridding himself of his human pretensions by reminding himself of his own mortality.

5. Suppose the poem used the pronoun "he" instead of "I", what difference would it make to the idea of the poem ? --The whole point of the poem lies in the poet's direct address to the fly on terms of equality. A change to third person would result in such indirect locutions as "He said to the fly that...." The students should see that much of the effect of the poem consists in the sudden, startling address to the fly.

6. Do you see any difference in the content of the two stanzas? --The first stanza presents the actual incident from real life that suggested the idea of the poem; the second stanza reflects on the meaning of the incident. The student may be shown that the stanzas of a poem are like the paragraphs of an essay: they indicate shifts in thought.

*7. What do you call the kind of rhyming lines that you get in this poem? Why are they specially appropriate here ? --Each stanza consists of three couplets. Since parallelism is the essence both of the subject and form of this poem, it would be a good idea to have the students pick out all the examples, such as "Drink with me and drink as I" and "Both alike are mine and thine."

8. What does the poet mean when he says, "Thine's a summer, mine's no more"? --From the perspective of eternity, the life of man is as fleeting as the life of a fly. Students might also be asked why the poet chooses summer, instead of one of the other seasons. They should see what connotations of the word "summer" make it the most appropriate choice. First, it does suggest a short season; secondly, it suggests a time of enjoyment and the fullness of life. As a time of sunshine, it contrasts with the coldness of death. (And, of course, on the literal level, summer is the time that brings out flies, but students should be taught to read poetry as metaphor and therefore the implications of summer should be pointed out.)

9. Could you describe the poet's mood in this poem ? --He seems to be cheerful enough in welcoming the fly on terms of comradeship, but at the same time, the connotations of "fly" suggest that this is a forced comradeship, rather than a chosen. (Students might be asked whether they would choose to have a fly share a drink with them.) Hence only the poet's refusal to mourn and his sense of humor protect him from the darker reality of death.

10. Why are the lines of the poem fairly short? Count the syllables. -- The shortness of life as symbolized by the fly and the slightness of the incident, its lack of beauty or grandeur of any sort,

seems to call for a slightness of execution; while the poet's sense of humor also permits a rather sprightly rhythm, considering the seriousness of the subject. For those students who had previously read it, "Loveliest of Trees" is an excellent poem for comparison in terms of tone, mood, varying attitude toward the same subject, the relation of form to thought, and other topics.

2. Leigh Hunt, "The Glove and the Lions", in Story Poems, p. 173.

Explication

This is a story poem that illustrates a moral, which is stated explicitly in the last line. As a masculine, "extraverted" type of poem, it presents no real problems of interpretation. For eighth graders, however, examination of the details that contribute to the total effect can be instructive; for example, the description of the lady's appearance as a preparation for her action and the stylized, yet effective description of the lions.

Study Questions

1. What difference do you notice immediately between this poem and the one you have just read? -- This poem tells a story, whereas the other poem was a reflection upon an incident.

2. How much longer are the lines of this poem than those of "The Fly"? Why are they longer? -- This is a narrative poem; the longer lines assist the movement of the story. The students could try the experiment of splitting up each line, so that each is only as long as a line from the preceding poem. They should see that short lines would detract from the emphasis on what happens, putting undue emphasis on partial actions. By using fourteen-syllable lines, the poet is able to make each line relatively complete as the statement of one part of the story.

3. Can you state the subject of the poem in two ways? --What happens, the plot line, may be one answer. The other will, of course, be the moral which is stated explicitly in the last line. Students are usually delighted when a story has a definite moral, for this is one kind of meaning that they are looking for and can grasp, one kind of order in the universe.

4. Who tells the story? --An omniscient narrator; he knows De Lorge's feelings for the lady and the thoughts that go through her mind.

5. What would be the limitations in an eye-witness account? --We could not have such direct insight into the lady's motives. And this poem is nothing if not direct.

6. What feeling do you get from the description of the king as "hearty", the lions as "ramping", the vigor of the count's actions?--This is a poem that puts the emphasis on action, not on thought; it is "red-blooded", masculine in tone.

*7. What contrast does the writer draw in the last two lines of the first stanza? Why does he call it a "gallant thing" and how do we view this judgment when we have finished reading the poem? -- The contrast between the noble assembly and the lion pit below seems at this moment to the speaker (whose words are ultimately ironic in view of what happens) a gallant thing; admiration for the assembly is accentuated by fear inspired by the lions. But notice that the lions are called "royal beast", which links them with the king. In addition, the contrast between those above and those below proves to be less strong once we have seen the lady in action. Again, a touch of irony comes out in the king's statement: "Faith, gentlemen, we're better here than there."

8. What impression is created by the description of the lions? --These are lions behaving as we expect them to behave. It is a conventional description and yet vivid through the details. The students should pick out expressions that help to create the picture for them, such as "horrid laughing jaws".

9. What do you expect of the lady from the way she is described? --Although she is described as beautiful, students should pick out the "smiling lips and sharp bright eyes" as a give-away of her character.

10. What does she mean by calling the occasion "divine"? --There are many people to see how great her power is over her lover.

11. Did the lady, in your opinion, deserve what she got? --This is a question that invites the students' participation in the poem.

12. What knightly customs are alluded to in this poem?--Particularly the throwing down of the gauntlet as a challenge and the throwing it in the face of one whom a knight wishes to insult.

13. What is the value of being aware of these allusions to the code of chivalry?--One can see the deliberate parallel between love and war. The lady's throwing down of her glove is a challenge to her lover; his throwing it in her face is the insult which marks her defeat.

14. Why does the king have the last word, rather than the lady or De Lorge? --He is the objective, authoritative person here (compare Duke Theseus in A Midsummer Night's Dream). His judgment is decisive and fittingly concludes the poem.

15. There are three parts to the poem--why? Could there have been one or two? --The drama neatly falls into three parts; the setting, the

activating cir cumstance (the king's words in the middle of the poem), and the rapid action and conclusion.

16. Why is the middle section the longest?--It gives the elements that precipitate the action in the last stanza. These elements are described in detail; the action, which is performed very quickly, is not described in detail. Students should see that what gets the emphasis, therefore, is not what happened to De Lorge in the lion pit but the lady's motives. Thus the conclusion is an apt summ ing up of the theme of the poem.

## PART II

1. "Edward, Edward", in Story Poems, p. 51.

Explication

One of the most popular old ballads in literature, "Edward, Edward," has a power that is created particularly by the manner in which the story is told. The horror of Edward's circumstances is learned gradually. He is unwilling to adm it his guilt pos sibly even to himself. First he claims the dripping blood on his sword comes from his hawk. His mother's penetrating comment, however, impels him to change his position. He gives a second explanation : this time the blood comes from his horse. His mother quickly dispels this alibi by making his explanation appear illogical. A climax appears in the middle of stanza three as he suddenly blurts out the true confession. Still another climax culminating in the complete horror of the situation does not reach the reader until the la st line. The process of moving slowly step by step, until this final curse, creates surprise, making the poem vivid and dramatic. From the beginning to the end of the poem there is a constant build-up so well done that interchanging stanzas at any point would weaken the total structure of the ballad.

The ballad contains other qualities that focus the reader's attention completely upon what is going on in the story. Because the tale is written entirely in dialogue, the reader never leaves the two speakers. No extraneous material interjected by a narrator lessens the reader's concentration upon the speakers and the tension created by the suspense. Continual use of repetition of words and lines creates an echo in the ears of the reader. Repetition of questions and answers in each stanza and the repetition of such words as "Edward, Edward" and "Mother, mother" as well as "O" at the end of each speech enhance the emotional intensity. Repeated long lines contrasted with short lines create a pounding cadence that echoes and re-echoes like the voice of doom. Finally, a great deal of what has ahppened to cause this family tragedy is either implied or omitted. The reader, then, is forced to use his imagination, thereby becoming involved in the poem.

Study Questions

(Answers to most of the student questions can be found in the explication.) Read the ballad "Edward, Edward" in your anthology.

Note: Point out to the students who are familiar with the seventh grade tape of the ballads that there are countless versions of this and other popular ballads.

1. Why do you think Edward does not admit his guilt immediately?

2. Can you detect climax in this ballad? Where does the first one occur? the second?

3. Are all the stanzas necessary?

4. Notice that the ballad is completely in the question-answer dialogue. Can you see advantages in writing a poem this way? What does it do for this ballad?

5. What does the person telling this story think about it?

6. Can you see reasons for repeating (a) certain words over and over, (b) certain lines over and over, (c) a uniform series of long line, short line?

7. Why does Edward leave the "curse of Hell" to his mother? What does this show about her part in the killing? Is she really as ignorant of the killing as it first appears? -- The revelation of her possible guilt seems to be implied at the end; it makes her the more villainous of the two.

8. What shock-effect then does the poet gain by reserving this stanza for the last? -- Many answers are possible here. If the previous question is considered, then the last stanza is a kind of capstone: the mother finds out what she wants to know; and we find out what we hardly expected to know.

2. Four Sea Poems

Dealing with a single subject, the sea, this group of poems should make students aware of the variations that are possible on a single theme. But not only does the sea excite different reactions in different people at particular moments of their lives, but even seemingly objective elements of description may alter their connotations with the context. Thus studying this group of poems, students may learn something about how language becomes the expression of an individual.

a. "James Stephens, "The Shell"

Explication

Accepting the sea shell as the traditional carrier of the sound of the sea, the poet allows the familiar sounds to carry him into a dream world which becomes more and more a nightmare, until he is awakened by the sound of a cart "jolting down the street". These contrasting sounds of the sea and the carts symbolize the wilderness of untamed nature and the world of civilized man. Nature is seen as impersonal, indifferent, and essentially non-human. To emphasize this view, the poet pictures the sea in its primal state, not only before the creation of man but before the creation of the sun and moon. From this grey, formless world, the poet turns with relief to the everyday world of men.

Study Questions

1. What is the poem about? --The student may say something about the sound of the sea as heard in the shell, but if he notices the end of the poem, he should get the idea of the contrasting associations suggested by the sound of the sea and the sound of the cart. This poem provides a good introduction to the idea of symbolic values.

2. What would the sounds of the sea and the cart suggest to you? --Students ought to see that for some, the sea might be a call to adventure and the cart might be nothing more than a reminder of the ills of civilization. It is not the sounds in themselves but what they suggest to the poet that provides the subject of the poem.

3. Why is it appropriate for the poet to speak directly of himself? --He is writing about a very personal reaction which, in fact, has no meaning except as a subjective reaction. At the same time, his feeling is common enough to mankind to be shared, at least momentarily, by everyone.

4. What kind of world does the poet picture as he listens to the sound of the sea? Pick out expressions that contribute to the impression you get. -- The nightmare world is conjured up by sights and sounds of desolation. Students can make a list of these.

5. Are there any words that particularly suggest something frightening or depressing to you? -- The connotations of such words as "tentacles" and "gray" will cause them to be selected; the teacher could then ask what associations the students have with these words that makes them frightening or depressing.

6. What does the poet mean when he says that there was no day or night in the world he imagines? -- To intensify the impression of formlessness and terror, the poet has described the sea as it might have appeared at the beginning of creation, before the sun and moon brought

beauty and comfort to the world.

7. Looking at the arrangement of a poem as it appears on the page can prove interesting and informative. What do you notice about the appearance of this poem? --The point here, of course, is that the poet has, consciously or unconsciously, varied the length of his lines so that they look like waves on a sandy shore. Have the students put a sheet of plain paper over the poem and draw a line over each line of the poem. Joining each line from one to thirty will show the pattern. You may wish to do the mechanical part yourself and give each student a sheet similar to the one which follows these explanations.

8. Write the last word of each line in a column on your paper. Join with a curved line the words that rhyme. Discuss these rhymes with your teacher. -- See question 10. The students should learn that two lines in a row that rhyme are called a couplet; three lines in a row that rhyme are called a triplet.

9. Read the last six pairs of rhyme as you have them listed on your paper. Do you find one pair that seems to be different. Ask your teacher to explain the difference between perfect rhyme and eye rhyme. --"wind" and "blind", of course, do not rhyme except to the eye.

10. Use of rhyme does more than create a pleasant sound effect. Poets use rhyme to enhance or contribute to the meaning. Rhymes also help to bind separate lines into a pattern and produce a greater unity in the poem. Thus line two and line five rhyme. What does this help to achieve? How does the use of many couplets contribute to the meaning of the poem? --Understanding a poem requires understanding the syntax of the poem. Eighth grade students can be led to a greater appreciation of poetry by seeing how the poet employs poetic techniques to clarify the syntax. The first nine lines of "The Shell" form a compound sentence. "Ear" closing line two in the first clause of the compound sentence rhymes with "clear" in the fifth line of the second clause of the compound sentence. The rhyme links the two clauses and helps to carry the meaning.

b. Alfred Lord Tennyson, "Break, Break, Break", in Immortal Poems, p. 373.

Explication

The second poem refers less to the sea than to the poet's state of mind. Whereas in "The Shell" the poet describes how his mood was affected by a vision of the sea, Tennyson comes to the sea with a state of mind produced by the death of a friend and finds in the sea a reflection of his own unhappy mood. Hence we have far less description of the sea in this poem than of what is in the poet's mind; instead of the specific

details used to develop the theme of Stephens' poem, here we have only the cold grey stones and the sea breaking on them. It is the repetition of the word "break" that most effectively suggests that the sound of the sea is a counterpoint to the poet's emotions; in the succession of heavy stresses we seem to hear the heaviness of the poet's heart speaking. In contrast to his comfortlessness, he thinks of those who in their happiness or success view the sea quite differently: the fisherman's boy, the sailor lad, and the ships that reach a safe harbor. This is an elegiac lyric, a single-hearted lament for the death of a friend.

Study Questions

1. Read "Break, Break, Break" carefully. Tennyson wrote this poem after the death of his friend, Arthur Hallam. With this in mind, write a paragraph telling what this poem is about. -- Refer to the explication.

2. Why has the poet repeated the word "break"? Why did he choose this word instead of the word "crash"?--The succession of stresses makes this line echo the heaviness of the poet's heart and his sense of the finality of death. The connotations of the word "break" make it more appropriate than the word "crash". For one thing, hearts "break"; the idea that something precious has been destroyed is far more effectively conveyed, therefore, by this word, than by the word "crash". But also, the word "break" is less noisy than the word "crash"; it puts the emphasis on what is lost rather than on the sound of the waves.

3. Why does the poet speak as if he had difficulty in expressing himself? See the end of the first stanza. --He is overcome with emotion; thus he speaks in exclamations that suggest a cry from the heart.

4. Why is "O" repeated so often in the poem? --The sound suggests a moan; the repetition is cumulative in effect and helps to maintain the mood of a lament.

5. Do you see any similarity between this poem and "The Shell"? --Both refer to the indifference of nature, the absence of human quality. Perhaps students can see that this is the reason the poet specifically mentions the "cold grey stones".

6. Which of these two poems seems to you to be more musical? --"Break, Break, Break" uses the ballad stanza abcb, and as the expression of a dominant emotion is more songlike than "The Shell", which is a momentary yielding to a nightmare world. It is important that Stephens can wake up from his bad dream, whereas Tennyson cannot. It is the sense of inescapable reality that rings relentlessly through "Break, Break, Break".

7. What is the poet saying in the second stanza and the first two lines of the third? --He is thinking of those whose association with the sea is a happy one, including the fisherman's boy, the sailor lad, and the ships sailing to a safe harbor. But these scenes contrast with his own sense of loss.

8. What do the "touch of a vanished hand" and "the sound of a voice that is still" contrast with in the poem? -- See the preceding question.

*9. What does "the tender grace of a day that is dead" mean? --Symbolically, day stands for life; the word :"tender" suggests the vulnerability of all life; and the word "grace" suggests beauty. Hence the phrase sums up what Tennyson has lost. At this point in the poem, for the first time he becomes explicit.

10. Is there any point in the poem at which the poet comes closest to uttering the thoughts that he has such difficulty in expressing? -- See the answer to the preceding questions, but even the second last line of the poem is metaphorical and hence indirect as a statement, using other terms than factual, objective ones. Remind students that a metaphor is saying one thing in terms of another and that poets write this way because the direct terms will not express the feeling so accurately as the emotion-charged terms of the metaphor.

c. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "The Tide Rises, the Tide Falls" in Immortal Poems, p. 350.

Explication

The contrast between man and the sea is once more dominant in this poem. Using as a refrain "And the tide rise, the tide falls", the poet emphasizes the constancy of the sea. Man comes and goes, lives and dies, but the sea continues the same. In the quiet, detached tone of the poet, we sense the impersonal quality of the ebb and flow of tides.

Study Questions

1. Does this poem tell a story? --Although the poem follows a chronological order, the refrain indicates that something other than plot holds the poet's attention.

2. Why does the poet repeat "and the tide rises, the tide falls"? --To emphasize the constancy of the sea in contrast to the changeableness of human life.

3. What are the main divisions of the poem? What is the reason for the stanza divisions? -- The stanzas each represent a period of time: (1) evening (2) night (3) morning. As the time of day changes for the

traveller and alters his activities, nothing happens to change the ebb and flow of the tides; hence the refrain underlines the contrast between : man's life and the sea.

4. Who is talking in the poem? -- An omniscient narrator.

*5. What seems to be his attitude to what he tells? -- He is simply stating what is, with as much detachment as possible. Only the rhymes at the end of the poem, "nevermore" and "shore", have a mournful sound.

6. Look up the words "curlew" and "hostler".

7. Notice the use of the word "calls" in the second line of each stanza. Why has the poet repeated this word? -- Each time of the day has its characteristic call.

8. How does the atmosphere of the three stanzas differ? What word pictures help to create these different atmospheres? -- In stanza 1, the twilight atmosphere is created not only through the word "darkens" and the calling of the curlew, but most vividly through the description of the sea-sands as "damp and brown". In stanza 2, the repetition of the word "darkness" creates an impression of blackness against which the white hands of the waves show up in sharp contrast. In stanza three, the business of day is suggested by the noisy activities of the steeds and the hostler, whereas stanza two suggested noiselessness.

9. In the second stanza what does the description of the waves at night suggest? Why has the poet spoken of the "soft, white hands" of the waves? --Here the sea is quietly removing every trace of man's presence. The waves are personified to intensify the sense that the sea is more powerful than man, though it works in darkness and through, in this instance, gentle little waves.

d. Psalm CVII, Verses 23-30

Explication

This passage comes from a psalm which is a call to thanksgiving. As one of the reasons for thanksgiving, God's rescue of sea merchants in a storm at sea is described. It is one of the signs of God's power that he can raise a great storm at sea, but when those in danger call upon God, he calms the ocean and brings the seafarers to a safe haven.

Unlike the other sea poems of this unit, this psalm has for its subject a direct relationship between man and the sea. Here the sea is viewed not merely as it affects man's emotions but as it affects his very survival when he has to travel on it. At the same time, the impersonal,

inhuman quality of the sea, which seemed dominant in the other three poems, is here transformed by the religious view. Now the sea becomes a symbol of God's power: he can raise a great storm and just as easily still the waves. If some of the students wish to interpret the passage as a total allegory of life, there is no reason why they should not.

Study Questions

1. Comparing this psalm with the poems you have just read, do you see a difference in the way man's relationship to the sea is treated? --See explication.

2. What contrasting examples of God's "wonders in the deep" does the Psalmist describe? --Both the storm and the calm are the work of God.

3. How does the Psalmist create a picture of the sea merchants' distress in the storm? --Both physically and mentally, the men lose control of themselves: two expressions describe their mental state ("their soul is melted because of trouble" and they "are at their wit's end".); and one describes their physical state (" They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man").

* 4. Why do we call a piece of writing like this, poetry? --The parallelism of each line creates a rhythmical balance; for example, "These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." The vividness of the imagery is another indication of the emotional intensity of the writing.

3. "The Love Letters of Smith," H. C. Bunner[1]
(See Student Version for text)

Explication

The story is set in the late 19th century, and that period is quite influential on the behavior of the characters in the story. They act like late 19th century Victorians in many ways, but they also have that indispensable universality of meaning and action that makes a story timeless. The plot of the story is fairly simple: the little seamstress is wearing away in the oppressive tenement and working conditions of New York. She is thin, pale, and anxious, and that anxiety reveals itself in several ways, chief of which is her indignation and suspicion at the gestures of friendliness by her neighbor Mr. Smith. One night, exhausted from her work, she is ready to go to bed without eating. As she sits before the window, too tired to move, the first human kindness that has come her way for ten years, apparently since she has been in New York, comes sliding along the window sill. Properly Victorian, she slams her window on Smith's kindness. The irony of course is that because of her hidebound ideas on what is proper, she is denying her own humanity. She forces herself into cruel actions, always rebuffing Smith, and finally even pours the porter on the flowers. But Smith, child of nature that he is, is unfettered by false notions of propriety. He is only a good man, not a "polished" one, and everything he does is natural and kind.

[1] (A Book of the Short Story, ed. E. A. Cross, New York: American Book Co., 1934, pp. 200-208.)

Smith is a man of intense honor. He has given his word that he will not address her, and even when he is performing as her protector against the band of loafers, he will not break his word. Instead, he startles a passer-by, shouting at him that "I ain't got nothing to write with!" so that he does not have to address the seamstress directly. In their nightly correspondence, only the warm details of the smoke of his pipe and the clink of his mug as he sets it down give the seamstress any evidence of his being a person, not just a writing machine. His character is revealed mainly through the letters, but also through such episodes as that mentioned above, when he refuses to violate his oath, and through his bringing back flowers from the country to the woman.

His vitality and experience--travel all over the world, farming, bear-killing--contrast with the seamstress' secluded, inexperienced life. They are opposites in that respect, but alike in their basic shyness, gentleness, and simplicity.

The point of view is mainly the third-person narrator, with an occasional intrusion by the author, e.g., after telling what the seamstress thought of Smith's appearance, the author says "Most people would have called him plain." Another example is the author's editorializing about the greed of tenement owners in the first paragraph. He tells us rather than lets us deduce from actions whenever he wants to speed his narrative along. The story is told through narration and through the use of letters. The letters are more for character revelation than for plot advancement. Each short misspelled epistle from Smith gives new insight into his character: simple, honest, forthright, determined. The author connects the letters with a stream of more important commentary and series of actions, occasionally summarizing the details of their correspondence in one paragraph.

The story illustrates the important principle of fiction that character determines incident and that action illustrates character. Everything these two people do is completely in character, completely plausible. They are made believable characters through their responses to the situations. "Characters responding to situations" is a fair short definition of a narrative,or storied form. Your students should be led to perceive that the "meaning" of the work grows out of the form in which it is cast, and that the storied form is one of the most common methods of organization.

Study Questions:

1. What are the living conditions of the seamstress? --Tenement, walk up of seven flights, hard bed, hard work.

2. Do those conditions have anything to do with her response to the first mug of porter? --Yes. She is suspicious, remembering the "hundred small slights" that she has received, thinking that nobody is naturally good and kind-hearted.

3. What else might have influenced her actions? --19th century manners.

4. What kind of man is Smith? --Kind, gentle, honest, forthright, determined.

5. What besides the letters shows you what kind of man Smith is?--His defense of her, his refusal to speak, his bringing flowers, and his attitude of gentle understanding when she pours the porter on the geranium.

6. How long does the courtship take?--Spring to September, a plausible length of time considering the way they were getting acquainted with a few notes every evening.

7. What is the biggest change Smith's friendliness makes in the seamstress?--She changes from being downtrodden to taking joy in life. Even her appearance changes.

8. Why is Smith given no first name and the seamstress no name at all?--It helps support the atmosphere of formality and stresses the fact that they do not know one another. It fits 19th century customs of address.

9. How does this story help us to understand people?--It helps us realize that sometimes people have to be worked with before they overcome the barriers they throw up against other people. The seamstress is unable to respond to Smith's kindness for a long time.

10. What is the only time that Smith deviates from character? Why?--In his letter of proposal, but it is really in keeping with his policy of doing everything the right and proper way. He copies a model letter, thinking that he is proposing the correct way. But he immediately reverts to his own natural ways by sending a short note in his own language asking her to marry him.

11. This is a fairly typical story of boy-meets-girl, boy overcomes obstacles and wins girl. How does Bunner keep it from being trite?--Mainly through the character of Smith who is not typically handsome but who is genuine and mature.

12. Can you guess how the seamstress is going to react to Smith's kindness after you have read a few pages? Do her actions fit her character?--Yes. Once she is established as a lady-like Victorian, we can fairly well predict her slamming the window on Smith's porter. But her attention to her geraniums and her sensitivity as a human being foreshadow her ultimate response to his flowers and kindnesses.

13. Does Smith act the way you would expect him to?--Yes. After the initial offer of porter, we know that whatever he does will be from the same kind impulse to help someone (he thinks porter is good for her health and will add meat) and to make her happy (he brings flowers from the countryside).

4. Excerpt from Thoreau's Walden

Explication

This paragraph is an example of non-storied prose. Instead of being organized according to a plot line, it focuses on the establishment of

a fact, in contrast with a myth. At the same time Thoreau by no means leaves the myth of the Bottomless Pond behind, even when he has established the fact that Walden Pond does have a bottom. Thus this simple experiment in determining the depth of a pond ends as a commentary on the human mind. From generalizing about the myth, to the very specific measurements recorded in the middle of the paragraph, and back to the myth as a philosophical necessity, Thoreau has given the paragraph a pattern that lends itself to analysis. But not only should it prove useful to students to see the generalization-specific detail-generalization pattern of the paragraph, but also it should suggest to them that fact and fancy may be brought together in literature.

Study Questions

1. Which of the first two poems in this unit does this selection most resemble? --This question introduces the distinction between storied and non-storied form. Students should see that this paragraph is like "On a Fly", in that it does not tell a story but instead takes a matter-of-fact subject and gives it wider significance.

2. Is there any difference between Thoreau's account of measuring the depth of the pond and a scientist's account of a similar experiment? --Students will readily see that while Thoreau's purpose in measuring the depth of the pond is not very different from a scientist's, he records his experiment in a non-scientific fashion, by embedding it in a paragraph of fanciful speculation.

3. This paragraph does not primarily tell a story; how, then, is it planned? In what order does Thoreau tell things? --He discusses the myth of the Bottomless Pond as the reason he set out to measure the depth of Walden; then the actual experiment is recorded in detail; and finally, he returns to the myth for the meaning that it still possesses in the face of fact.

4. Look up "Styx" in your dictionary and then explain why Thoreau mentions it. --The mythological allusion suggests the kind of mystery that human beings associate with the unknown.

5. Why does Thoreau say that the pond has "a reasonably tight bottom"? --This is a little humor directed at the notion of the bottomless pond.

6. What does he mean by saying that not an inch of the pond's depth "can be spared by the imagination"? -- The fact that the pond is fairly deep encourages the imagination to believe that it is infinite.

*7. What is a symbol and what does the pond symbolize?--Something

known that stands for the unknown; something definite that stands for the indefinite. The pond, because of its depth, is able to stand for the infinite.

8. Is there any sentence that sums up the whole paragraph? Can you explain why this sentence is placed where it is? --The last sentence sums it up. The end of the paragraph gives particular emphasis to this sentence.

9. Has Thoreau robbed the pond of mystery by measuring its depth? What about the climbing of Mount Everest; did that rob the mountain of mystery? --This question, at least as far as Thoreau is concerned, should be answered in the negative. In fact, he is quite willing to let Walden be a symbol of the infinite as he says, forgetting that he has determined its depth. The students may wish to disagree with Thoreau's conclusion, and, in this scientific age, have a good case.

OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER

# TRAVEL LITERATURE

## Literature Curriculum II

## Teacher Version

## CONTENTS


| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| Introduction | 1 |
| From We by Charles A. Lindbergh | 2 |
| From Farthest North by Fridtjof Nansen | 4 |
| From Kon-Tiki by Thor Heyerdahl | 6 |
| From Alone by Richard E. Byrd | 11 |
| From Wind, Sand, and Stars by Antoine de Saing-Exupery | 14 |

# TRAVEL LITERATURE

## Introduction

At this point in the curriculum we feel it is important for the students to realize clearly that a storied form can be either fiction or non-fiction. Later, they will begin to see that questions of storied or non-storied form also involve questions of tone and purpose. (Pilgrim's Progress, for example, is a storied form, but no one reads it as a novel.) But such concepts are best left until later, when the three basic headings of Subject, Form, and Point of View begin to merge. Hence the introduction at this point in the curriculum of short, storied, but non-fictional selections. Further, the action, excitement, and suspense found in the selections should be refreshing, and their shortness makes them less difficult to comprehend and discuss in their totality than the later novels and plays.

Discussion of the selections can take several profitable directions. In contrast to earlier works, the students should be brought to see that here the basic structure is narrative, that the primary organizing principle is the relation of a series of events. The point of view in all the selections is first person, but profitable distinctions can be made between the degree of personal response and of projection of personality that appears in each piece. This distinction in turn can lead to discussion of subject: the subject of the Lindbergh selection, for instance, is almost entirely reportorial, factual description of the flight itself; while the subject of the Byrd selection is as much the man Byrd as it is the incident.

Since one of the main purposes of writing of this sort is to make the reader participate in the experience, the students' attention should be directed to some of the formal aspects of writing, such as diction, vivid simile, selection of incident, paragraph construction, and any other aspect of the work that seems usable. The students' understanding of the form and structure of narrative prose can be extended by writing exercises. For example, following a discussion of the beginning-middle-end narrative form, the students could be asked to write a short personal account. They should be encouraged to use vivid details, concrete words, sensory impressions, and figurative language.

Any good narrative should stand alone without a detailed introduction, but many students respond better and achieve fuller understanding with the help of background preparation. These selections lend themselves well to the introduction of such aids as pictures from magazines, motion pictures and slides, maps, and actual objects. These should inspire interest, provide the environment for the action the characters are engaged in, and help develop new ideas.

The arrangement of the selections has been determined by the degree of personal involvement the author demonstrates. Thus, the first piece, from Charles Lindbergh's We, is almost completely

reportorial. Then follow selections from Nansen's Farthest North, Heyerdahl's Kon-Tiki, St. Exupery's Wind, Sand, and Stars, and Byrd's Alone. The last selections will be seen to have moved a considerable way in tone and consequently in subject from the pure objectivity of the first.

I. From We, by Charles Lindbergh.
Text. See Student Version.
Explication.

It is difficult for young people to catch the flavor of an era as distant in time to them as May 1927, when Charles Lindbergh flew the Atlantic, the first non-stop solo flight across the ocean. Perhaps it is too much to expect them to visualize the gaudy, glittering era of the Twenties, that ten-year party celebrating the end of America's childhood, with the terrible hangover of the depression years to follow. Equally difficult is it to try to imagine the wave of adulation and hero-worship that swept the country as the result of Lindbergh's achievement. Perhaps those historians are right who see it as a desperate attempt to relate to a lost innocence and a simpler code, an attempt to make Lindbergh a symbol of what America no longer was but wished it might still be, an attempt to deny the realities of life in the Twenties. For against a background of loosening morals, easy money, graft in high government circles, and a nationwide disregard for the Constitution and law as evidenced by the total failure of Prohibition--a disregard for law and a basic dislike for the "cops" from which many sociologists say we have never recovered--Lindbergh's achievement, his modesty, dedication, and integrity, stand in sharp contrast. This is at least an explanation for the phenomenon of his unparalleled popularity. Lindbergh could have had anything he wanted. Some of this should, if possible, be conveyed to the students, because with this background the simplicity and total lack of self-dramatization that one finds in We is even more remarkable. The students could well draw parallels from their own experience in the roughly similar attitude of, say, the astronaut John Glenn, in a roughly similar situation.

It might also increase their sense of history if it is pointed out to them that the Wright brothers flew the first airplane barely sixty years ago, and that barely thirty years separate Lindbergh's epochal flight --a flight made now in six hours by commercial jets hundreds of times monthly--from the flight around the world of a human being in a manned space capsule. The acceleration of phenomena is so rapid that one barely has time to gasp. Lest they think all this is as ancient as Adam, it might be pointed out that Charles Lindbergh is still alive and vigorous, and still active in aviation.

In discussion the point should be made clear that this, though factual, is nonetheless a storied form. It is the straight chronological account of a flight from America to Europe. The students should notice that the concentration is on what happened, and very little is said about the author's state of mind or his emotions. To fit the tone, the style is simple, the sentences and paragraphs short, and there is no "mood writing." This aspect of the piece will serve well

for later contrasts with St. Exupery.

Study Questions

Note: For the first couple of selections, no attempt has been made to distinguish between easy and difficult questions. The selections are simple, and most of the study questions deal with concepts that should be grasped by all students.

1. You have been dealing this year with various methods of organizing writing. What is the basic method of organization of this selection?--The students should see that this is a chronological narrative, a storied form. Discuss the difference between storied and non-storied forms with them, so that they get the distinction between a work structured around the narrative of a sequence of events and other principles of organization.

2. Lindbergh's flight actually happened. It is true, not fiction. Would it have made any difference to the organization of the selection if it were fiction?--Again, the students should see that both fact and fiction, prose and poetry, can be storied in form.

3. One of the main differences between storied and non-storied forms is that storied forms usually have a clearly defined beginning, middle, and end. In this selection the divisions are particularly clear. Find them. --This should be very easy, as the first and last paragraphs constitute the logical beginning and end. The students should be made aware of the advantage of having a beginning-middle-end pattern in writing of this sort. They should be encouraged to relate their observations to their own writing, where an introduction-body-conclusion pattern serves the same purpose.

4. This is a first-person narrative. How much did you learn about Lindbergh from reading this passage?--Most of them will probably see that very little of the man's personality comes through. He never mentions his feelings or his reaction to anything. The writing is quite objective. Lindbergh is quite laconic in describing such dangers as ice forming on his wings, or having to fly blind through the fog.

5. The word "style" is a loose term used to describe the way someone writes. It is possible to recognize many writers' works through their very distinctive style. Style involves such things as choice of words, length and type of sentences, use of imagery, and other aspects of writing. What can you say about Lindbergh's style? Does his style contribute anything to the tone of the piece?--The students will probably notice the short, simple sentences, the short paragraphs, and the total lack of any imagery. They should see that this is an integral part of the objective, laconic, reportorial

tone of the passage. Later comparison with the highly ornate St. Exupery will help them become aware of some of the aspects and effects of style.

6. Many stories deal with some sort of conflict. It is the outcome of the conflict that interests the reader. Is there any conflict in the selection you have just read? If there is, what was the outcome?--Some students will undoubtedly see that though it is unspoken, there is a conflict here between man and nature, and that the resolution of the conflict by the successful crossing is one of the things that gives the passage some coherence.

7. No writer is perfect. Can you find anything which you might wish to criticize in this passage, as far as organization, development, or unity are concerned?--There are several paragraphs in which Lindbergh veers away from the flight narrative to make observations which he then does not develop. Some of the students may notice that these tend to break the unity of the selection, and to distract the reader by opening up side trails. Cf. the three paragraphs beginning with "The English farms were very impressive...."

8. What does the following sentence really say: "The sun went down shortly after passing Cherbourg, and soon the beacons along the Paris-London airway became visible."--This is one of the most common errors in writing, and if the students can see it in a model, perhaps they will become aware of it in their own writing. The sun, of course, did not pass Cherbourg; Lindbergh did.

II. From Farthest North, by Fridtjof Nansen
Text. See Student Version

Fridtjof Nansen, the famous Norweigan explorer, was a humanitarian, statesman, marine zoologist, pioneer oceanographer, and author. In 1888 he and five other men crossed Greenland from east to west. Then in 1893 he outfitted the Fram, having built it to withstand ice floes, and sailed North again. He and Hjalmar Johansen left the Fram and tried to reach the North Pole by kayak and sled. They came within some 272 miles of their destination, closer than any man had ever been before. The two years the men had spent in the Arctic became the subject of Farthest North.

In 1922 the famous explorer was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work with World War I refugees. Franz Josef Land was renamed in his honor. His most enduring monument, however, remains Farthest North, an able and exciting account of man agains the elements.

Explication

The passage included here illustrates the basic narrative pattern of beginning, middle, and end. It is a brief episode, occurring when the men were nearing the end of their terrible journey. It is this fact that lends a special poignancy to the episode. To have come so far, so painfully, to have endured two years of lonely travel across the Arctic wastes, and then to be faced with death and defeat, with the end almost in sight, not as a result of the elements, but only because of one second's carelessness--all this adds to the horror the reader feels as he watches, with Nansen, the kayak drift out into the icy sea.

Point out to the students (or better, let them tell you) the underlying narrative pattern, the situation, complications, and solution. Ask them to note the use of concrete words. The language is simple, direct. From what has been told in this passage, can the students draw any conclusions about the author? The fact that Nansen had survived two years in the frozen wastes of the Arctic speaks for itself, of course. But in this one episode alone, one quality emerges that is essential to an explorer. He acts as quickly as he thinks, and he does not hesitate. Such hesitation would have been fatal here. He was courageous as well as decisive. He points out that, since he had no choice, his action would hardly be termed courageous. Ask for opinions.

The students should notice that this selection is far more personal in tone than the Lindbergh selection. It might be interesting to have them count the number of times the word "I" appears in the two selections. It might also be instructive to have them compare the number of times such abstractions as "joy" "delight" or "courage" crop up in the two pieces. In this way they could begin to see how within the same basic narrative form the subject and point of view of a piece can vary enormously.

Study Questions

1. Discuss the incident related in this passage in class, to make sure you understand the words and the situation. --Make sure the students understand such things as the wind being "off the ice," the certain death involved if Nansen had turned back, what auks are and why Nansen shot them, what a kayak is, and anything else that is unfamiliar.

2. Is there a beginning-middle-end pattern in this story? If so, where would you make the divisions? --One cannot be arbitrary about divisions like this, and the students may disagree about where they would make their divisions. But they should all come up with something. One probable division would be paragraphs one and two for the beginning; three through six or seven for the middle; and seven or eight for the end. The main thing they should see is that there is an introduction, a conflict, and a resolution of conflict, a pattern which arouses and then satisfies our

expectations.

3. How much do we learn about Nansen from this passage? How does Nansen's story differ from Lindbergh's in such things as tone and subject?--See explication. The students should be able to notice the increased emphasis on the narrator's internal state, and his concern with his predicament.

4. Good writing involves, among other things, the use of concrete details and vivid description. Can you find any examples of such things in this selection?--Select pertinent passages from the text and discuss them with the students.

5. You have discussed conflict in the Lindbergh selection. Is there any conflict here?--Yes indeed. Again we have the conflict between man and harsh nature. But there is also the conflict of Nansen with himself, a type of conflict of which Lindbergh makes no mention. This is, of course, a function of subject, and the students should see that the subject of this selection is almost as much Nansen as it is "man against the elements."

6. Compare Nansen's style with Lindbergh's--Those students with an ear will readily see that Nansen's style, though perhaps a bit stiff and formal, is still more mature than Lindbergh's, which is barely better than what they could write themselves.

7. No writer is perfect. Can you find anything which you might want to change, or criticize, or eliminate?--This question will elicit all sorts of answers. Probably some of the students will question the introduction of the shooting of the auks in a narrative concerned with the saving of a boat. This is a moot question, and a good case could be made either for its inclusion or its exclusion.

III. "Catching Sharks with our Hands" from Kon-Tiki, Thor Heyerdahl

It was not simply a yearning for adventure that took Thor Heyerdahl and his companions across the Pacific on a crude balsa raft. The journey was undertaken to prove a theory. Heyerdahl believed that the islands of the Pacific had been settled by early American Indians who sailed there hundreds of years ago. Other anthropologists believed Asia to be the source of all Island cultures, and doubted besides that an early American craft could possibly have sailed that far. The question of course was debatable, but Heyerdahl undertook to prove his point by making the voyage himself. He left the coast of Peru in April 1947 on a balsa raft named Kon-Tiki in honor of the ancient pre-Inca sun god.

Although the expedition was scientific in nature, it was nevertheless a great adventure. Piloting the crudely made vessel across the world's greatest ocean was an undertaking that required great courage. There were many dangers to be faced, known and unforeseen. In a sudden storm, they would be at the mercy of great waves and

screaming winds that could smash the tiny raft to matchwood. They might miss their goal and drift on until they died of hunger and exhaustion. And there were sharks....

Text. See Student Version
Explication.

This is really two excerpts that we have put side by side for comparison. The first selected passage (A.) is part of a section dealing with the living creatures that abounded in the ocean surrounding the raft. Whales and dolphins have preceded the sharks, the octopuses, squids, and tunas follow. The students should quickly see that this is not an essay about sharks. It is a narrative which relates in story form some of the author's experiences with sharks. He tries to share these experiences with his readers by using vivid descriptions that are impressionistic and sensory. His chummy use of "we" seems to include us with the crew, and so vicariously we feel the threatening presence of the sharks, "the dorsal fin always stuck up menacingly." Heyerdahl's masterful use of diction should be pointed out to the students. Help them to understand the effective use of metaphor and simile, as well as strong, precise verbs and pictorial adjectives. Have the students read again the passage that describes the sharks as they follow the raft, to appreciate the force of words like "unbridled strength," "streamlined bodies," "steel muscles," "razor sharp teeth," "crescent-shaped jaws." "broad flat head" which built up the feeling of fear and danger. Also notice the verbs chosen to describe the high points of action--"heaved himself toward the raft," "water boiled round us," "lashed the water into a foam." The strength of the shark and its behavior are details expressed by comparisons--"gaffs bent like spaghetti," "shark jumped up like a begging dog," "parallel rows of sawlike teeth," "small green cat's eyes and enormous jaws which could swallow footballs," "till the war dance was over."

Get the students to notice the order in which various experiences have been dealt with. Beginning with the vague feeling of being menaced by the dorsal fins sticking up out of the water as the sharks follow the raft, each paragraph adds more detail of the strength of the sharks: the bundle of steel muscles, the rows of saw-like teeth, and finally the impenetrable skin that turns aside a knife. The cumulative effect is very powerful, and is skillfully handled.

The second section (B.) occurs after the crew has visited Easter Island. Seasoned sailors--or rather raftsmen--by this time, they have become familiar with the ocean; and with familiarity, respect has dwindled. Even the sharks do not awe them so much any more, and they begin to take liberties with them that would have been unthinkable in the beginning. They start by feeding them bits of fish tied to the end of a rope, and making them beg like pet dogs. Gradually they grow braver, until they end up pulling the sharks' tails.

However, they still respect the five or six rows of razor-sharp teeth, and the iron muscles that make a sledge hammer out of the tail.

Longer than the first excerpt, this narrative lacks the easy flow of the first selection, and the students might be able to detect weaknesses in the order of the paragraphs. While the account of Knut's close escape from the jaws of a shark is very interesting and full of suspense, it interrupts the continuity of thought that began with the feeding of the sharks and ended with the tail pulling.

This would be a good time to discuss with the students the difference between narrative used to tell a fictional story, and this kind of narrative that conveys actual experiences. The fictional writer is able to choose exactly what he wants in order to bring his story to the desired ending, and he uses only those details that contribute to his planned effect. The reporter of actual experiences is limited by the necessity for truthfulness in the telling. He must report what happened, and he has no control over the sequence of events. It takes imaginative writing to maintain a feeling of suspense in this prolonged conflict between a handful of men on a raft, and the ruthless and omnipotent sea.

The tone of the writing is worth commenting upon. It is not the impersonal reporting of Lindbergh, nor yet quite as personal as Nansen's account, which includes dialogue. While describing accurately and in detail the dangers that surrounded them, the passage is restrained in treatment and plays down the courage and endurance of the author and his crew.

Suggestions for Activities especially helpful for slower students.

After reading the title of the narrative the students may want to tell about sharks. They have had some experience with sharks from the TV programs they have observed and through their reading. During their discussion, list on the board the facts they mention. Later, have the students compare these facts with the information given by Heyerdahl. What knowledge did they obtain from the selection?

To help the students visualize the geography of the narrative, have them locate Callao, Peru (naval harbor where the raft was built): Marquesas Islands; Pukapuka (an island sighted by crew); Raroia reef (the boat grounded on this reef); Tahiti (the island where the raft was towed); Humboldt and South Equatorial Currents (the ocean currents that carried the raft).

If they are curious about the construction of the raft read "Across the Pacific by Raft" pp. 83-86 in the "Permabook" paperback edition of the book. Why did Heyerdahl insist on using a raft instead of a boat? Read about naming the Kon-tiki, p. 91. Encourage students to read other incidents of the adventure.

Study Questions

1. Thor Heyerdahl, the author of the selection, chose the first-person point of view--that is, he was one of the seamen, a member of the crew. It is through his writing that you learn about the members of the crew and their experience in capturing sharks. Why does this choice of the first person make the adventure seem more real? Would the narrative have been the same if it had been written from the third person point of view? Give your reasons. --The emphasis which personal interest adds to certain details would be lost, and the effect could be a lack of involvement for the reader. This, of course, is not necessarily true, and an interesting discussion might ensue.

2. Heyerdahl said, "We had great respect for sharks on account of their reputation and their alarming appearance." What did he mean? How did the shark earn the crew's respect? Describe his "alarming appearance." What features of the shark seemed most terrifying to you?--The sharks' size, great strength, swift movements, and sharp teeth caused the crew to respect them. Also, the creatures had the reputation of being the man-eating variety of sharks. When the crew attempted to capture the sharks, the gaffs bent and the spearheads of the harpoons were broken. The students should notice how the author describes each part of the shark's body: for example, "the fin always stuck up menacingly." Have them find other illustrations.

3. To help you see and feel the excitement of the "hectic struggle" and "tug of war" with the shark, the author has suggested comparisons between two different things, "small green cat's eyes" and "sandpaper armor on the shark's back." He has used the figure of speech called a metaphor in these descriptions. He used another figure of speech called a simile--"gaffs bent like spaghetti" and "bamboo stick stuck up like a periscope," which states the comparison by the use of the word "like". Discuss the meaning of other metaphors and similes you found in the selection. Why did the author use comparisons?--See explication.

4. To help you share his impressions of the sharks, the author has used many descriptive words to add meaning to the nouns: "unbridled strength," "steel muscles," "crescent shaped jaws." Find other descriptive words. --See explication.

5. Notice the verbs Heyerdahl has chosen to describe the exciting moments---"Knut heaved himself toward the raft," "the water boiled round us," and "the tail lashed the water into foam." Why did he choose those verbs? --See explication.

6. Compare the organization of selection A with that of selection B. How do they differ? Which do you feel is the more effective writing?--See explication.

7. Although the narrative relates time incidents, many of the elements found in fictional storytelling are present. One of these is conflict. Explain the conflict in these selections. What is the effect upon the reader?--The conflict between the men and the sharks creates suspense and heightens interest in the story.

8. What kind of people are the author and his companions on the raft? How do you know? What are your feelings about them?--The students are sure to say the men are brave and that they admire them. The narrative itself makes no mention of this, but the undertaking was one that required great courage. Part of the appeal of this type of literature is the vicarious experience of facing danger and identifying with the hero.

Suggestions for Composition:

1. If you were given the time and money to make a journey, where would you go? Write a paragraph giving reasons for your choice and what you would hope to learn.

2. Prepare a report about one of the following and present it to the class:

   a. Who Peopled Polynesia
   b. Legend of Kon-Tiki
   c. Building the Balsa Raft
   d. Choosing a Crew
   e. Course of the Journey
   f. Winds and Currents of the Pacific

   Information about the suggested topics can be found in the complete book Kon-Tiki, which is available in a paperback edition (Permabook P 243).

Other Activities

Go to the library and find other travel stories that might interest your class. Make a list of them for the bulletin board. Check with the librarian about the correct way to make a bibliography. Choose one of the stories and read it.

IV. From Alone, Richard Evelyn Byrd

Author

Scientist, explorer, and military commander, Richard Evelyn Byrd was an important figure in the exploration of both the Antarctic and Arctic regions. In 1928 he led an expedition to the Antarctic and established a base at the Bay of Whales. The following year Byrd and three crew members flew over the South Pole, the first ever to do so, indeed the first to actually see the Pole.

Byrd's adventures began at the age of twelve when he left his home in Virginia and traveled alone to the Philippines. At thirteen he had already sailed around the world. Longing for further adventure, Byrd made careful plans to explore the North and South Poles. Since this would require seamanship, he entered Virginia Military Academy. After graduation, he was appointed a midshipman at Annapolis, but due to a series of football accidents, he was left unfit for active duty. Still interested in exploration, however, he decided to become a flier.

On May 9, 1926, accompanied by Floyd Bennett, he made the first airplane flight from Spitsbergen to the North Pole, going there and back in fifteen hours. Later he began his conquest of the Antarctic. On his second expedition he spent several months alone at the advance base.

During the long winter months, Admiral Byrd kept an accurate and detailed record of his experiences at the Advance Weather Base in Antarctica. This record provided the basis for his book Alone. His problem in writing was to select and condense the personal and scientific material in his journal which would be interesting and meaningful to his readers. The result was a vivid and exciting description of his existence in the hostile wilderness of Antaractica.

Text. See Student Version.

Explication

Byrd's account is much more personal than Lindbergh's or Nansen's. In explaining his purpose in manning a weather base alone during the Antarctic winter night of 1934, he states that he wanted to "know that kind of experience to the full," the experience of being physically and spiritually on his own. In many respects he shares with Thoreau the desire to give up the complexities of modern life and all the pressures that push a man this way and that. In the solitude of the Antarctic winter night, Byrd hoped to confront life deliberately and take inventory of his soul.

The episode assigned is sufficiently self-contained to illustrate narrative form. From the safe beginnings of the storm, while Byrd remains in the shack, to his growing awareness of the storm, to the

climax of the storm and the shutting of the trap door and the resulting moment of panic, to the search for the shovel and the return to safety, we have a dramatically organized unit. The account gains its power to move the reader by the fact that it is a true story told by the person who lived through the experience and who was sensitive enough to respond in a more than animal-like struggle for survival. As readers, we are fully aware of the vulnerability of human life, the will to survive, and the personal courage of the man. This is not an anonymous human being in danger of losing his life, but a particular individual who suffers and whose sufferings become universal as well as individual.

Apart from the dramatic skill of the telling, the writer communicates the experience by his ability to use language vividly. His figures of speech--metaphors, similes, personifications--and his considerable powers of description enable the reader to share the experience and not merely hear a report of it, as in Lindbergh's narrative. Preserving a fine balance between the record of what happened and the interpretation of it, Byrd keeps us very much in touch both with the objective realities of his situation and with his subjective responses, relating them with the detachment of a wise yet fully human person.

Study Questions

1. How has Byrd organized the account of this incident to make it complete as a narrative in itself? -- He begins with the first signals of a storm, shows it growing in strength, reaching a climax as he climbs the pole, and a catastrophe as he lets the trap-door close; his moment of panic, his rational approach to the problem; and safety once more--all this clearly gives the narrative a beginning, middle, and end.

2. What was Byrd's purpose in going aloft? -- He was a scientist seeking information about wind velocity; he was not simply taking risks for the sake of adventure.

3. What kind of man is this who observes the beauty of a red candle against "the rough-hewn snow?" What do you notice about his descriptions generally? -- The artist's eye and powers of description.

4. What part do comparisons play in Byrd's description of the storm? Find the one that he uses repeatedly. -- To the reader who has of course never been in Byrd's situation, the experience can be comprehensible only through comparison with more familiar experiences; hence Byrd uses many similes and metaphors. The one that he uses most often is a comparison of the drifting snow with the sea: "as an incoming tide;" "I breasted it as I might a heavy surf;" "pounding like the surf."

5. How does the telling of Byrd's experiences differ from the

others you have read in this unit? -- Byrd shares his thoughts with his readers. The other writers do not do this, but limit their writing to an account of what happened. Byrd specifies his reactions to his circumstances, and allows the reader to get inside his mind and feel the frustration, panic, weariness, and blessed deliverance that he experiences emotionally.

6. Under ordinary conditions, the shack would not appear as the most desirable place in the world to be. How is our view of it affected by the storm? -- The shack becomes a sanctuary; Byrd's glimpse of it down the ventilator sums up its value for him at this moment.

7. Although the events Byrd is describing are true, he uses many of the devices employed by a fiction storyteller. How, for example, does he hold the reader in suspense as he struggles to open the jammed trap door? -- The contrast between the danger and discomfort of his predicament and the safety and warmth of the shack, the conflict between the powerful forces of nature and the frail creature, man, the repitition of struggle followed by failure until success is finally achieved are all literary devices that heighten suspense.

8. The fact that Byrd survived to write the story of his experiences leaves no doubt about the outcome of his dangerous adventure. Does this knowledge destroy the suspense or lessen the reader's interest in the narrative? -- No, the dramatic quality of Byrd's writing involves the reader emotionally so that he identifies with the explorer in his struggle against the elements.

9. What series of emotions does Byrd pass through from the moment he discovers that the trap-door is shut? -- Panic, desire for his shack, hope of finding the shovel, relief and happiness at regaining his shack.

10. This is more than simply an adventure story about a man who survived the rigors of life in Antarctica. It deals also with human qualities and spiritual experiences. What are some of the abstract subjects of this narrative? -- Courage, hope, fear, endurance, the search for knowledge, truth, integrity, loneliness are all subjects treated through the concrete facts of this story.

11. In what way has this experience, lived vicariously with Byrd, changed your view on life in general? -- He has helped us to understand the tremendous natural forces which dwarf man until he appears small and helpless by comparison. We also appreciate more the strength of character that can endure and overcome such relentless opposition.

12. What quality in Byrd impresses you most? -- His courage, a courage that is all the more impressive because the sensitivity of the man in some ways makes him more vulnerable to the destructive effects of the whole experience.

13. When you read the excerpts from Kon-Tiki, you discussed the importance of precise verbs, pictorial adjectives, metaphor, and simile. Byrd also uses these things effectively, and adds another interesting figure of speech, personification. This attributes human qualities to inanimate objects. For instance, he writes that "the gale sobbed in the ventilator." What other example of personification can you find in this selection? Why do you think Byrd uses this figure of speech? -- "the Barrier unwrenches itself from quietude," "the blizzard vaulted to gale force," "(the gale) pounded the roof with sledge-hammer blows." The use of personification makes the storm appear to be a personal enemy, "vindictive" and "malevolent," which heightens the drama of the conflict between man and nature.

V. "The Elements," from Wind, Sand, and Stars, by Antoine de Saint Exupéry.

Introduction

"The Elements" is taken from Wind, Sand, and Stars, a remarkable book that recounts Saint-Exupéry's experiences as a pioneer pilot. It is filled with excitement and adventure, but that is not its chief charm. The French pilot had a remarkable feel for language; his book captures in an almost indefinable manner the very essence of flight.

Saint-Exupéry was an air pioneer, opening commercial routes over Africa, the southern Atlantic, and the Andes. He published Night Flight in 1932, Southern Mail in 1933, and Wind, Sand, and Stars in 1939. In that year he received one of France's top literary awards.

His plane was shot down in May 1940, while he was fighting the Germans. Eventually he made his way to the United States via Portugal. He published three books while a resident in the States --Flight to Arras in 1942, Airman's Odyssey in 1943, and The Little Prince, a children's fantasy, in 1943.

He managed to find a way to rejoin the French forces resisting the Germans in France, and was reported missing in action in 1944. His plane had disappeared over the Alps during a battle with the Germans.

Explication

"The Elements" is more than just an account of the author's experiences when he was caught in a cyclone along the coast of southern Argentina, although his description is masterly. It is also a philosophical reflection upon the duality of man whose physical being dominates the spiritual in moments of crisis. The Form, however, is narrative, with the incidents arranged in chronological order, and the students will have no trouble in identifying the beginning, middle, and end pattern of the storied form.

Discuss with the class Saint-Exupéry's reaction to the storm. He analyzes his own feeling at some length, and concludes he is not the same man now as the one that was caught in the twister. He believes that horror is not present while something happens; an event can only be looked at with horror afterwards. Such an analytical reaction will cause students to think about Point of View in an new way. This is written in first person, but here we have Saint-Exupéry, the writer, describing the emotions of Saint-Exupéry, the pilot. He looks at this altogether different man dispassionately, as he had looked, during the storm, at his hands frozen on the controls. Can the students see any difference in the way Saint-Exupéry , the writer, feels about the storm, and the way Saint-Exupéry, the pilot, caught in a life-and-death struggle, felt? Ask them to note that the idea expressed in the opening lines is returned to again at the close, leaving a feeling of narrative completeness.

The author's style is worth commenting upon. Although all these selection have been written in the first person, there is a world of difference between the impersonal reporting of Lindbergh, and the emotional involvement of Saint-Exupéry. His treatment of detail and skillful use of figurative language create sensory impressions that make the narrative "come alive" for the reader. If there is a flaw in his style, it is that in the more reflective passages Saint-Exupéry borders on the "flowery."

This selection more than the others shows very clearly the abstract subject of the passage. In fact, the author states it himself in the final sentence: "The physical drama itself cannot touch us until someone points out its spiritual sense." Several times during the narrative, in addition to the introduction, he makes the same point that there is no drama at all except in human relations This may be rather difficult for some eighth grade students to understand, but discussion in class should help them to grasp the idea.

Study Questions

1. Why does Saint-Exupéry think Conrad's description of the effect of a typhoon upon a group of people in the hold of a ship was more effective than an attempt to describe the storm itself? -- It is not the account of the physical violence of a storm that has power to move people but the effect of the storm on human beings.

2. Why does he doubt whether people will be affected by his battle with the storm? -- He is trying to convey as objectively as possible what went on at the time of his great struggle with the elements. He is trying to tell the tale without adding to it the horror that is part of the aftermath of such an experience.

3. Does he succeed in keeping a sense of horror out of his account,

while yet presenting the experience in its full intensity? -- Yes, he records what happened and what he felt at the time, which was not horror but rather a feeling of emptiness. He was far too busy trying to keep alive.

4. How does he create an atmosphere of foreboding before the storm breaks? -- The unusual blueness of the sky, which "glittered like a new-honed knife," upset the pilot. He also reports that he was bothered by "a sort of ash-colored streamer in the sky" which he "did not like the look of." He tells of tightening his harness, and the "vague distaste" which he felt as he prepared for physical exertion. The whole tone of the three paragraphs before the storms breaks prepares the reader for something unpleasant, and it is largly the author's choice of words that creates this atmosphere, such words as;"secret little quiverings," and "a warning drum on the wings of your plane."

5. Why does he have a single sentence as a paragraph at the moment that the storm breaks? -- To emphasize the dramatic effect.

6. What is his definition of a symbol and why is his choice of image a good one to describe his situation? -- "...the event to which one is subjected is visualized in a symbol that represents its swiftest summing up." His image, the man carrying plates on a waxed floor, suggests the precariousness of his position.

7. Are his emotions similar to Byrd's in his struggle with the elements? -- No, on the whole Saint Exupéry is too busy handling the plane to have time to feel much; he mentions only brief spasms of panic. "I had no thoughts. I had no feelings except the feeling of being emptied out. My strength was draining out of me and so was my impulse to go on fighting."

8. Why does he repeat over and over to himself, "I shut my hands?" -- Everything depends on his grip on the wheel, and he is afraid his numb fingers will let go.

9. Compare his description of the sea with Lindbergh's. What difference do you notice? -- Saint Exupéry is much more vivid, using similes (the whiteness of crushed sugar and the green of emeralds). Lindbergh simply says that the ocean was "covered with white caps."

10. Which of these two writers who describe things as seen from the sky gives you a greater sense of what it is to be flying? -- Saint Exupery, because his similes and metaphors are much more graphic than Lindbergh's bald description. Students can be asked to pick out a number of effective similes and metaphors.

11. Find the beginning, the middle, and the end of this narrative. What do you notice about the beginning and the end? -- The beginning and the end both deal with the same idea: there is no drama without human relationships. The long middle section contains the play-by-play account of the storm.

12. What do you notice about the order in which the events of the storm are related? -- They are arranged in chronological order.

13. Now that you have read and discussed this selection, what would you say it is about? Is there an abstract subject that lies deeper than the story itself? -- Yes. See Explication.

14. You have already discussed some differences between Lindbergh's writing and Saint-Exupéry's. How does Saint-Exupéry's purpose in writing differ from Lindbergh's? Does this reflect in the author's point of view? If you think it does, explain how. -- See Explication.

15. All of the selections you have read in this unit were written by men whom we might consider to be adventurers. Do you think that at the time they were living these experiences they felt the adventure? Explain your answers. -- Saint-Exupéry answers this question very well in "The Elements."

Suggested Activities

1. With the aid of your librarian, compile a bibliography of aviation stories that you think students in your class would enjoy reading.

2. Choose one of these books to read, then prepare a report for the class, recounting some of the highlights.

3. Have you ever lived through an experience that was not at all funny at the time, yet afterwards you were able to laugh about it? Or perhaps you suffered through a painful experience from which you emerged a wiser person. Either prepare to recount your experience orally to the class, or write a few paragraphs about it. In preparation you will need to list all the events in the order in which they happened. You will also need to plan a good introduction and a satisfying ending.

4. Search current newspapers and magazines for examples of people whose experiences you think would belong in this unit. Make a brief statement giving your reasons for including each.

5. Make a bulletin board for the classroom using Adventure as the theme.

**OREGON CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER**

# NARRATIVE POETRY

## Literature Curriculum II

## Teacher Version

Teacher Version

# NARRATIVE POETRY

## Introduction

This unit is intended to build upon the knowledge of poetry gained by the students through the seventh grade study of ballads, and to prepare them for the study of lyric poetry to be introduced next year. All of the poems included here are narratives, although many of them do more than merely tell a story. We have tried to order them so that they will serve to bridge the gap between the storied ballad form, and the non-storied lyric. Most of them lie somewhere between the entertaining narrative of "Lochinvar," which opens the unit, and the philosophic treatment of "The Man He Killed" which contains many features of a lyric, and with which we have ended the unit.

Only one long narrative is included, "The Prisoner of Chillon." The others are all rather short, and each has been chosen for its own special emphasis which will provide a basis for comparison and contrast. It is not intended that each poem shall be studied in exhaustive detail. We hope rather to acquaint the students with a variety of narratives of a non-ballad nature, and to introduce a number of poetic terms such as symbol, dramatic monologue, continuous form, connotation, and imagery, and to reinforce what has already been taught about meter, rhyme scheme, simile, and metaphor.

The questions focus upon the poems through a consideration of Subject, Form, and Point of View, and have been designed to bring out the relationships that exist between these useful if arbitrary divisions.

It will be noted that several of these poems deal with varying attitudes towards war. It was felt that a few poems grouped around a single topic (and currently such a timely topic) would stimulate discussion about such things as the writer's attitude toward his subject, the solicited response of the reader, irony and bombast, the power of poetry to persuade, and the whole question of poetry as an emotional as well as an intellectual stimulus.

All of the poems used here are to be found in Story Poems, edited by Louis Untermeyer, and published by Washington Square Press, Paperback W555 / 60¢. Page numbers refer to the page in that volume where the poem will be found. NOTE: For your convenience, the questions asked in the Student Version are printed here, along with possible answers, except where answers are readily apparent and therefore not needed here.

READ: LOCHINVAR by Sir Walter Scott, p. 153.

Study Questions

1. There are a few words in the poem that might be unfamiliar to you. Some of them you will be able to guess from the context. Look up the others in your dictionary.

Line 5 dauntless
Line 7 brake
Line 11 laggard, dastard
Line 16 craven
Line 26 quaffed
Line 30 "Now tread we a measure"
Line 32 galliard
Line 38 charger
Line 39 croupe
Line 41 scaur

2. Retell the events of the story in your own words.

3. On the concrete level, this poem is about a bride who was carried off on her wedding day by her lover. On the deeper level of ideas, what abstract subjects does this poem deal with?

4. Where does the action of the story take place? What clues do you find in the poem? -- This is just inside the Scottish border from Northumberland. The clues are the Eske River, the Solway, the mention of the Border in stanza 1, Netherby,and Cannobie Lee.

5. How does this poem differ from the ballads that you read last year about lovers? -- The guy got the gal in this poem! In the ballads, they were always parted.

6. Why had Lochinvar been refused permission to marry the bride? Where did he go with her when they rode off? What was the groom's name? Why are you not told these details? Is this a ballad? -- We are not told these details because they are not essential for the telling of this story; indeed they would detract from it. A good case could be made for calling this poem a literary ballad on these grounds; however, the language is far from simple, and the poet's views are very apparent. Also there is no incremental repetition.

7. What is the meter of the traditional ballad? Does this poem follow the same pattern? What does the rhythm suggest to you? -- The traditional ballad meter has four accented syllables in the first and third lines, and three accented syllables in the second and fourth lines. Obviously this is not a typical ballad stanza, and the rhythm suggests the galloping of a horse.

8. What is the rhyme scheme of the traditional ballad? How does it compare with this poem? -- The traditional ballad rhymes ABAC. This poem has rhyming couplets throughout.

9. Conversation and repetition are two things frequently found in traditional ballads. Are these devices used here very much?

10. A simile, you remember, compares two things that are not obviously similar. Can you find an example of this? What does it mean? -- "Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide." Love

is not a static thing, but grows and recedes much as the water level in a tidal river.

11. Compare the language of this poem with that of a traditional ballad. -- It is much more sophisticated.

12. Is the writer of this poem telling the story in the detached manner of the traditional ballads? Do you know where his sympathy lies? How do you know" -- By the adjectives he uses to describe the bridegroom --"laggard," "dastard," "craven" compared with Lochinvar who is "dauntless," "faithful," "gallant." While Lochinvar sweeps the lady off her feet and dashes off with her, the bridegroom stands "dangling his bonnet and plume." There is no doubt where the poet's sympathies lie!

READ: THE PRISONER OF CHILLON by George Gordon, Lord Byron, p. 198

Explication and Teaching Suggestions

Since this poem might prove difficult for some students, it is suggested that you present it to them orally. After reading it through completely, it might be wise to clear up any problems of vocabulary that you feel it necessary to deal with before beginning a discussion.

The first question in the Student Version is designed simply to ensure that all the students understand exactly what the poem tells.

Although the poem is about human cruelty, suffering and death, most students will recognize that it is chiefly concerned with the yearning of the human spirit to be free. Perhaps this would be a good time to tell the students a little about Byron himself. Born wealthy, lame from birth, moody and often unpredictable, he yet valued freedom so highly that he joined the Greeks in their struggle for independence against the Turks. He contracted a fever while compaigning with Greek troops and died at the age of thirty-eight.

The poem is a dramatic monologue; the first person account makes the experience more personal for the reader, involving him emotionally so that he feels intimately related to the suffering of the prisoner whose presence he is constantly aware of throughout the narration.

The meter maintains a rather steady rhythm in iambic pentameter which the occasional variations only tend to emphasize, reinforcing the idea of the dull monotony of the weary endless days spent in the dark dungeon. Similarly, the repetition of the couplets emphasizes the endless sameness which again the occasional variations in the rhyme scheme serve to heighten by contrast. Questions 4-8 are intended to make the students aware of the unity of thought and form, and to demonstrate how the poet has carefully constructed his work to create a vehicle which will appropriately carry his ideas.

Ask the students to read again the first stanza, paying special attention to words like "rusted," "vile," "spoil," "banned," "Barred," "forbidden," and "wreck." Help them to understand the connotations these words convey, and encourage them to find other well-chosen words throughout the poem which contribute to the mood.

Guide them to appreciate the imagery that Byron uses to appeal to our senses, and discuss his use of simile and metaphor to reinforce these sense impressions. Here are a few examples:

"Our voices took a dreary tone
An echo of the dungeon stone" (stanza 3)

"For he was beautiful as day
. . . . . .
A polar day which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone." (stanza 4)

"He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was withered on the stalk away" (stanza 8)

"Among the stones I stood a stone" (stanza 9)

Encourage the class to find and comment upon other examples.

Discuss with the students the symbolism of the bird. Does it stand for light? joy? beauty? love? freedom? the human soul? or all of these and more? Explain the economy of a symbol which, meaning more than what it is literally, enables a poet to suggest so much with just a few words.

You will probably need to guide the students to an understanding of the final stanza. Readjusting to the demands of normal life in society is very difficult for someone who has long been cut off from the mainstream of life. Returning prisoners of war could be used as an example of the insecurity people feel who have been out of touch and lost the ability to make decisions, and accept the daily responsibilities that have long been denied them. Read Hemingway's "Soldiers Home."

Study Questions

1. Byron follows the traditional narrative pattern of beginning, middle, and end.
   a) What do you learn from the introduction that is necessary to an understanding of the story?
   b) What are the main events related in the body of the poem? Tell them in the order in which they happen.
   c) What event ends the story?

2. What are the main ideas or abstract subjects that this poem is about?

3. Compare the characters of the three brothers. Why do you think the oldest brother survived? Find references in the poem to support your ideas.

4. From what point of view is the poem written? Why do you think the poet chose to tell his story this way? What effect does it have upon the reader?

5. Look at the way the poem is printed on the page. Are all the stanzas the same length? What has determined the nunber of stanzas? This kind of organization is known as continuous form. Why is this form suited to the subject?

6. Does the main part of the poem follow a general rhythmic pattern? How would you describe it? What effect does this meter produce upon the reader?

7. Find some variations in the rhythm. What do they contribute to the poem? Look especially at the description of the isle in stanza 13. How does the change in rhythm accentuate the thought?

8. What is the dominant rhyme scheme? How does the repetition of the couplet, along with the rather regular meter, contribute to the subject?

9. "Repose" is a word that usually has pleasant connotation. It is used to describe the sweet sleep of an infant, or the grateful rest after toil, and is usually a blessed thing. What is the effect of coupling it with the word "vile" (line 6) -- "a vile repose"? Do you see how this shocking contrast has made vivid the unnatural inactivity of imprisonment? Find other words in the first stanza that through their connotation create the gloomy, fearful atmosphere of prison. Explain the line in stanza 2: "That iron is a cankering thing."

10. What poetic device is Byron using when he says that a sunbeam in the dungeon is "Like a marsh's meteor lamp"? (stanza 2) Explain the meaning, and why it is especially effective here.

11. Find other examples of simile and metaphor in the poem, and comment upon the contribution they make to the ideas they are helping to express.

12. Re-read stanza 9 in which the poet describes his withdrawal into temporary insanity. What imagery does he use to create the lack of all feeling, the emptiness he experiences during this time?

13. The prisoner's sanity was restored by the visit of a bird. Explain how the bird became a symbol for the poet. Find the metaphor in stanza 4 where the youngest brother is likened to a bird. Do you think the poet made a deliberate connection between the two? Why?

14. Summarize in your own words stanza 11. Why was this transition necessary before the prisoner was able to bring himself to view the outside world again?

15. What is the meaning of the couplet

"And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me."? (stanza 12)

16. Discuss the symbolic meaning of the final stanza. Why would a man, cut off from society for years, be reluctant to face the responsibilities and problems of everyday living? Does this mean that he has lost the ability to live a free life?

17. Now that you have studied the whole poem in some detail, why do you think Byron wrote about captivity to illustrate freedom? Is Byron expressing his own views? Find examples where you think the poet himself is speaking.

READ: HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX by Robert Browning p. 16

Study Questions

1. What was the good news? Why was speed so urgent? Why are we not told these things?

2. In your own words, tell the events that the poem describes. Is it a complete story?

3. What is this poem about on the level of ideas? What abstract subjects does it contain? -- Responsibility for the safety of others, endurance, courage,

4. What does the rhythm of the poem suggest to you? Have you read another poem with a similar rhythm? -- A galloping rhythm, similar to that of "Lochinvar."

5. What is the rhyme scheme? -- Rhyming couplets.

6. "Lochinvar" and this poem are similar in meter and rhyme. Which is the more dramatic? Why? -This, being told in the first person, has the greater dramatic impact.

7. What other poem have you read that was a first person narrative? -- "The Prisoner of Chillon." What is the name we give to a poem written from this point of view? -- A dramatic narrative, or dramative poem.

8. How has Browning achieved the echo effect in stanza 1? -- By a change in rhythm; "speed" in line 3 has a heavy accent, in the next line it is light, and suggestive of an echo.

9. Look at line 34. Did the sun really laugh? Do you know what we call this poetic device when something inanimate is made to have

personality? What is the poet saying here through suggestion? -- A little time might be well spent on a discussion of personification, since it will be met with again, more importantly, later on. Help the students to see the power of suggestion at work, so that personification becomes a kind of shorthand for the poet. It enables him to convey a lot of meaning in a few words.

10. Find two examples of simile in the poem. Explain why they are especially effective in creating an image for the reader. -- Line 24, "The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray," and line 47, "With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim," among others.

11. Read line 40 aloud: "'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff." What do you notice about it? Why is this effective? Do you know what we call this device of the poet? -- Help the students to hear how the repetition of sounds suggests the actual sound of the horse's hooves over the dry grass. Whether or not you give the students the terms "alliteration," "assonance," and "consonance" at this time is unimportant. The main thing is to help them to understand that the way this is said has meaning and contributes to the effectiveness of the poem.

12. Who is the real hero of this story? How has the narrator who is telling the story in the first person managed to keep himself in the background? -- The poet keeps the focus upon the horse, who obviously is the hero, and tells nothing of the rider.

13. Earlier you were asked to tell the story in your own words. Which account was more interesting to listen to, yours or the poet's? Why? Find words and phrases used in the poem that convey vivid sense impressions, and make the experience come alive for the reader. -- Encourage the students to find and comment upon parts of the poem that appeal to them.

READ: THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, p. 19

Study Questions

1. What does the title mean? -- Since "charge" to today's children probably means buy now, pay later, it might be a good idea to discuss the military meaning of the word. The Light Brigade of course was a cavalry unit carrying only light weapons, as opposed to heavy artillery units. It is important that the students understand the attack had little chance of success, and was the result of a military blunder.

2. This is a fast-moving poem with only two accented syllables in each line. Beat the rhythm on your desk. What does it suggest to you? -- If they have seen enough Civil War films, the students will surely say it soundslike the steady beat of a war drum.

Now clap the rhythm of each syllable. What does it suggest? -- The galloping of horses. Discuss with the class how the way the story is told is as important as what is said, and that in this case it recreates the noise of battle. If the class is interested in prosody, you might introduce the term for this type of rhythmic foot -- "dactyl."

3. Pick out the words that rhyme in each stanza. Are any rhymes carried over to the next stanza? Where is rhyming more frequent, at the beginning, or toward the end? Can you see a reason for this? -- Discuss with the students how motion is given to the poem through the use of rhyme, and the more frequent the rhyme, the quicker the pace. It is the rhyme and rhythm together that make this a fast-moving poem.

4. What other device besides rhythm and rhyme keeps the poem moving quickly? -- Repetition. Have the students notice the variations in repetition also, where there is a slight change from stanza to stanza. This also keeps the action moving forward.

5. What is the poem about? Is the fast pace suitable to the subject? Why? -- The poem is about action in battle, no time for reflecting, just unthinking action. The fast pace is very suitable.

6. What is the poet's attitude toward the event? Is this a realistic picture of war? -- This is a typical nineteenth century view of war as glorious. The individual is unimportant, the honor of country all that matters. It ignores completely the sordid details of fighting, the real suffering, cruelty, and pain involved; therefore it is quite unrealistic and dramatic in a general sort of way, like watching a spectacle from a great distance--dehumanized.

7. Can you think of a comparable event in American military history? Were the soldiers heroes? What do you think the reaction would be today if an officer made a blunder that caused the death of most of his men? Would a modern poet make heroes of them all? -- Custer's Last Stand will probably come to mind. Making heroes of the victims probably helps salve the conscience of the blunderer, as well as helping the next-of-kin to accept the needless death of a relative. Today the guilty officer would be investigated by a Congressional Committee! Newspapers would deplore the bungling. It would be difficult to imagine a poet making heroes out of the victims. Civilian involvement in war has taken away the glamor.

8. Would this be a good subject for a ballad? In what way does the poem resemble a ballad? Why is it not a ballad? -- Battle and death have always been subjects suitable for ballads, and in recounting such an incident, wtthout any background, but plunging right into the action, the poem does resemble a ballad. But there the resemblance ends. This is not told simply and impersonally. The technique is complicated, and the poet injects himself into the telling.

9. What poetic device is used when the terms "Valley of Death," "Jaws of Death," "Mouth of Hell" are inserted in the poem? Is it effective? -- Personification is used here, making Death a living presence,

and Hell synonymous, but since the terms are so hackneyed, they lose a lot of their effectiveness.

10. Would the poem have been complete without the last stanza? Does its addition strengthen or weaken the poem? Give your reasons. -- Of course this is a matter of opinion, but the poem would probably have been stronger had it ended with the fifth stanza. Urging people to offer glory and honor to the helpless victims of a stupid mistake is a poor argument. Besides, the second line of that stanza does not rise to the dignity of the sentiment expressed in the first line. Even poet-laureates are not perfect.

11. What is the appeal of the poem? Is it an honest one? -- Most of the students will probably respond with favor to the stirring rhythm and emotional appeal of the excitement of battle. It is like watching a Hollywood spectacular. Is this what war is really like? A good discussion could be made out of this, especially if students have older brothers or friends fighting in Vietnam. A discussion could profitably arise about the persuasive power of poetry, and the author's point of view. See question 7.

READ: OLD IRONSIDES, by Oliver Wendell Holmes, p. 220.

Study Questions

1. Who is the speaker in the poem? In your own words, summarize what he is saying.

2. What did you notice about the language of the poem? Are these typical English sentences? What about the vocabulary? Why do you think the poet chose this style? -- The normal order of English sentences has been reversed in some instances, and the words themselves are not the ordinary words of everyday language. The style is stilted and formal, with many high sounding phrases, to lend importance and dignity to the poem.

3. Compare this poem with a ballad. What similarities and what differences can you find? -- The meter and rhyme scheme are the same as those of the traditional ballad, although each stanza is eight lines rather than the usual four. The point of view is not the impersonal one of the ballad, and neither is the subject the retelling of an incident. Rather it is an impassioned plea to save a historic battleship from the ignominy of the scrap heap. The language is very sophisticated, unlike the simple wording of most of the ballads.

4. What doss the poet mean by "the harpies of the shore" (line 16)? How does this relate to the "god of storms" mentioned in the last stanza? Why is the connotation important here? -- In Greek mythology, the harpies were hideous, filthy, winged monsters with the head and trunk of a woman and the tail, legs and talons of a bird, who carried off the souls of the dead, seized the food of their victims, and were

generally relentless and snatching. "The harpies of the shore," therefore, refers to the salvage company that would break up the ship and sell the pieces for scrap. The connotation is an extremely unpleasant one. Since it invokes memories of Greek mythology, the god of storms mentioned in the last stanza obviously refers to Poseidon, god of the sea. To be sacrificed to Poseidon has much more dignity than to be snatched away by harpies.

5. Explain the symbolism involved in the term "the eagle of the sea." -- This of course refers to the battleship. The one word "eagle" at once suggests power, grandeur, pride, traits in keeping with the dignity and glory of a great nation. The word appeals to patriotism and pride in performance.

6. Find examples of metaphor, and discuss their effectiveness. -- Line 7, "the meteor of the ocean air," refers to the flaming cannon and suggests super-human power--hurled from Olympus perhaps? "Her thunders shook the mighty deep" is another way of saying the same thing. The mythological connotations make the poem heroic (or try to). Students might discuss the success of the device.

7. Compare this poem with Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade." Do you see any resemblance?-Although one describes an English cavalry attack, and the other tells about an American battleship, both poems glorify war. Both use extravagant language and appeal to an emotional kind of patriotism, typical of the nineteenth century.

READ: THE RULER OF THE QUEEN'S NAVEE, by William Schwenck Gilbert, p. 305.

Study Questions

1. How does this poem differ from the others you have read in this unit? -- It is humorous in tone.

2. How do the meter and rhyme contribute to the humor of the poem? -- The varied meter and rhyming couplets result in a quick, lilting movement, suitable for comedy. The rhyming of "navee" and "carefullee" also indicates a lack of serious intention.

3. What other device used by the poet adds to the humor? -- Repetition. The fourth line is repeated in the fifth, sometimes with variation, while the last line of each stanza is the same, except for a slight change in the final line of the poem. This type of repetition was common in the many humorous songs of the day, so the form itself suggests comedy.

4. Before the Parliamentary Reform Bill of 1832, it was possible for one person or family to control the representation of a borough in parliament. What political comment is the poet making in stanza 5? (A borough is a voting district.) -- For a fee, a man could be assured of a seat in Parliament, but he would have to vote according to the dictates

of the powerful family that hired his services. He was hardly a representative of the people!

5. What is the poet's opinion of naval command? Explain. -- An appearance of industry, especially in minor details of no consequence, a willingness to do what you are told without question, and a complete lack of thought are necessary attributes if you are to succeed in the Navy; you are also helped if you have a total lack of any practical experience. These requirements seem to the poet to fit the "top brass" in the "Queen's Navee."

6. What do we call this kind of humor that pokes fun at dignified institutions and makes them appear ridiculous? Why do you think people find it so amusing? -- Satire appeals because there is truth in the exaggeration. It is rather like a cartoon that blows up certain features out of proportion. The resulting grotesque caricature is still recognizable, but humorous compared with the image the public is offered seriously. We laugh for the same reason that we find it amusing to see a pompous dignitary, full of his own importance, slip and fall on a piece of banana peel.

7. This poem is part of a comic opera, <u>H.M.S. Pinafore</u>, that satirizes many aspects of Victorian society. Military blunders were not uncommon--remember "The Charge of the Light Brigade"? How does Gilbert's attitude compare with Tennyson's? Which do you consider the more effective? Why? -- Students of course will probably have differing views, and a good discussion could result. Some might find Tennyson's "glory" theme inspiring. Others will find it false and sentimental. Some will admire Gilbert's attitude as being more realistic, and will argue that his humorous approach is healthier than a tirade would have been, and certainly more effective. No official investigation could have been as devastating as the public laughter at the expense of bungling bureaucrats.

READ: THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM, by Robert Southey, p. 232.

Note: During the War of the Spanish Succession, English and Austrian forces under the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene of Austria defeated the Bavarians and the French in battle on August 13, 1704. This battle, which saved Austria, was the most notable victory of the famous Duke of Marlborough, and Blenheim Palace in Oxford was erected for him by a grateful English Parliament. This was later to be the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill, Britain's leader during World War II.
The Battle of Blenheim was fought on the left bank of the Danube near Hóchstädt, Bavaria, which is the setting for this poem.

<u>Study Questions</u>

1. Read simply as a story, what is the poem about? How is the story told? -- Encourage someone to give a short account of the story in his own words. If the students do not comment upon the amount of

conversation, point out to them that much of the story is told through question and answer, in the manner of the ballads.

2. What do you notice about the last two lines of each stanza? What form do the first four lines of each stanza take? -- Students will probably recognize the ballad stanza in the first four lines, in both rhyme and meter, with a rhyming couplet at the end. They will also comment upon the repetition of "the famous victory."

3. Is the story told impersonally? Do you know the poet's attitude about war? How can you tell? -- Since the story is told through the people talking, the students might say it is impersonally told. But they will almost certainly detect the poet's ironic attitude toward war. It may not be easy to get the students to see how he gets his ideas injected into the poem. Ask them if the questions of the boy and girl seem normal for children. They will probably agree that these are the poet's questions, and that through them, and through the children's comments, he is expressing his own views, which go counter to the popular acceptance of war as glorious and necessary.

4. Compare this poem with the three that you read before it. How is it different? -- The tone is different. Tennyson and Holmes are expressing patriotic sentiments glorifying war, Gilbert is satirizing it, and Southey is making a comment upon the useless suffering and death that war entails. "It was a glorious victory!," but no one remembers what the war was all about in the first place, nor what good came out of it, if any. Thousands of soldiers died, innocent civilians were driven from their homes, and suffered unspeakable hardship--for what? The glory of a general? A discussion of various attitudes towards war should lead the disucssion to questions of tone and attitude in poetry.

5. Explain the irony of the last stanza. -- Presumably irony was discussed in the last question. This may not be an easy concept for eighth graders to grasp, but a discussion here should be well worth the time spent. It is something the students will encounter again and again in their reading. Just how far you take it will of course depend upon the readiness of the class.

READ: THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB, by George Gordon, Lord Byron, p. 23.

Note: Sennacherib was King of Assyria from 705 B. C. until he was murdered by his sons in 681 B. C. He consolidated his empire by conquering all his neighbors, and most of them surrendered without putting up much of a fight. The cities of Philistine and Judah resisted for a while, but eventually these too were taken over by Assyria. This poem is based upon a biblical account of one of the battles, although historians are agreed that it is misplaced in the biblical sequence and must have happened at another time, if indeed it happened at all. If you would like to read the biblical account of the story, you will find it in the Old Testament, in II Kings 18: 17 - 19:37.

Study Questions

1. Who is the Assyrian? What is the meaning of "cohorts"? What is meant by the word "mail" in verse 5?

2. Tell the story in your own words. What do you suppose caused the soldiers to die during the night? How do you interpret the "Angel of Death"? -- There is no explanation given. Perhaps the water had been poisoned, or the food, or a rapidly spreading plague took its toll. The deed is attributed to an act of God--hence the Angel of Death.

3. Find the two similes in the first stanza. What information do they convey in a very condensed form? -- "like the wolf on the fold" gives an understanding of the helpless position of the Judeans, and the savage strength of the Assyrians. "like stars on the sea. . . ." gives the geographic location.

4. Discuss the power of the two similes used in the second stanza. . . . -- Point out the emphasis of the contrast.

5. How has the poet used rhythm and rhyme to contribute to the total effect of the poem? -- The regular rhythm (anapestic tetrameter) and the rhyming couplets reinforce the image of a well-ordered army. The triple meter may suggest the prancing of horses, while the close rhyme may suggest the ranks of soldiers.

6. Explain the line in the last stanza "And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal"; what kind of victory does this imply?

7. How does this poem differ from the others you have read in this unit? -- The point of view from which it is written is different. This poem brings in an outside power, God, who rules over the natural outcome of the opposing armies. The religious element brings in overtones of moral judgment. The wicked Assyrians are destroyed, presumably because they worship false idols, while the army of Hezekiah is saved, not through any strength of their own but because they acknowledge the power of God. Right prevails with divine intervention. The mighty have been brought low. It is God's world--a comforting philosophy, declaimed in the final two lines of the poem, which ring majestically in a powerful climax.

READ: THE LISTENERS, by Walter de la Mare, p. 350.

Study Questions

1. Who is the Traveler? Where was he going? Why did he stop at the house? What was the word he had kept? Who are the listeners? Why do you think the poet did not explain these things? -- Obviously the poet intended this to be more than a story. The whole poem breathes an aura of mystery, and we are invited to make of this mystery what we will. Perhaps the Traveler represents Man on his journey through life. As he knocks on the door, he is conscious of "a host of phantom listeners"

--spiritual beings perhaps, but he is answered only by silence. The deep questions he asks about the meaning of life, his search for the reality at the heart of things, remain unanswered, but at the same time he knows they have been heard, so he leaves his message and goes on his way. Some people see a religious meaning in this poem. The Traveler is Christ, returning as he has promised, knocking on the door of the soul, yet receiving no answer. But to force any one interpretation destroys the delicate, mysterious quality of the poem. A recognition that the poem does present a mystery, and that it makes us aware of our own spiritual natures is perhaps sufficient.

2. How did you feel when you finished reading the poem? Do you think the poet wanted you to feel this way? Why? -- This question of course is tied closely to the first. No doubt the students will say they felt puzzled and wanted an explanation. The poet presents an enigma without an answer, and has spent a great deal of talent in producing this effect. It is fairly safe to say this was his intention. The poem appeals to something we have all felt, but never explained, something indefinable, yet at the same time real.

3. We usually think of silence as the absence of sound. How does the poet think of silence? -- He makes it a positive force, like the sea, something that "surged softly backward" after the sound of the horse's hoofs had gone. This is a metaphor, as some students may percieve.

4. Have you ever been alone at night in the country? Did you feel the presence of life around you in the way de la Mare describes it? Find words and phrases in the poem that express the awareness that you are not really alone.

5. What do you notice about the meter of the poem? How does it add to the atmosphere of mystery? -- The meter is far less regular than in any of the other poems read thus far. Indeed there is a hesitancy, with rather long silences imposed by the arrangement of the words, that adds to the feeling of strangeness and unreality.

6. Examine the rhyme scheme used by the poet. What effect does this produce, expecially when regarded in conjunction with the meter? -- The a b c b d e f e progression gives forward direction to the poem, offset by the hesitancy of the rhythm, which adds to the strange quality of the poem.

7. What words and phrases has the poet used that increase the mystery of the poem?

8. In what important way does this poem differ from the others in this unit? -- The narrative is less important here than it is in the other poems. De la Mare has created a mood, and the elusive deeper meaning dominates the poem. It is far closer to the lyric than any of the other poems read so far.

READ: THE MAN HE KILLED, by Thomas Hardy, p. 85.

Study Questions

Vocabulary: nipperkin -- a half pint cup
'list -- enlist in the army
traps -- the tools of a trade

1. Is the speaker of the poem the author? If not, who is it? What is the occasion? What kind of poem is this? -- The speaker is not the author, but a character created by the author, in this case a soldier. The occasion is some time after a battle in which he has killed a man, and obviously it is the first time he has taken a life in battle. Since the soldier is telling the story, this is a dramatic poem.

2. How much do we know about the speaker? What clues do we find in the poem? -- The poem tells us quite a lot about him. He is not a professional soldier, but enlisted because he was out of work. He is a simple working man, probably a plumber, carpenter, or handy man, and he has sold his tools. He uses the colloquial speech of an uneducated man. He is kind and friendly, the type of person who likes to engage in conversation with a stranger at the local bar, and treat his new friend to an occasional beer. He is generous, knowing what it is to be poor, and will gladly lend half a crown (roughly half a dollar) to help out a man in need.

3. Why is the word "because" repeated in stanza 3? -- The soldier has just killed a man in battle. Normally he would be horrified at the thought of taking a human life, and he is trying to figure out the implications; repeating the word gives him time to think, and so he comes up with the answer "because he was my foe."

4. Coming as it does at the end of a stanza, the word "although" gets more than the usual emphasis (stanza 3). What purpose does this added emphasis serve? -- The soldier realizes that his explanation "because he was my foe" is not a good one. It gives a name without a reason. He is not much of a thinker, but even he is not satisfied with his answer, though he cannot see already what is wrong with it. He does realize that, met under different circumstances, the man could have been his friend. The stress on "although" serves to emphasize the doubt.

5. What do you think was Hardy's purpose in writing this poem? What idea has he conveyed through the story? -- There is no rational defense for war. Men who have no grudge against each other kill without knowing why. The problem is as great a puzzle to us as it is to the soldier in the poem.

6. Compare the language of this poem with the language used in "Old Ironsides." Which do you find more effective? Why? -- Hardy uses understatement, while Holmes used hyperbole. The simple words of this poem are closer to real life and therefore more effective. There is strength in the stark fashion in which Hardy's idea is presented.

7. The author's attitude can often be detected through his choice of

character, situation, and language. How would you describe the tone of this poem? -- Help the students to understand the irony of the understatement that Hardy uses here. This may be a very difficult question for eighth graders to understand, but some of the quicker students will enjoy discussing Hardy's fatalistic attitude --it is all a question of luck, mere chance that the two met as soldiers on the field of battle instead of meeting over a beer in friendly fashion.

8. In what way does this poem resemble "The Listeners"? How is it different? -- Both poems are saying something far more important than the story itself. The poet's meaning is very clear in this poem, but the other poem is more open-ended as far as interpretation goes. The poets have different purposes for writing.

## SUGGESTED POEMS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING

THE TWINS, by Henry S. Leigh, p. 320.
SPANISH WATERS, by John Masefield, p. 31.
BOADICEA, by William Cowper, p. 222.
THE SONG OF THE SHIRT, by Thomas Hood, p. 122.
THE DEATH OF THE HIRED MAN, by Robert Frost, p. 90.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING

1. Choose one of the supplementary poems, and answer the following questions, using complete sentences.
   a) What is the subject of the poem?
   b) What is the poet's purpose in writing about his subject?
   c) Who is the speaker in the poem? Is it the poet?
   d) Is there anything in the poem that strikes you as noteworthy? What impressed you most?

(*Note for the teacher: For superior students you could use these questions to form the outline for a connected piece of prose writing.)

2. You have read a number of narrative poems, all different from the ballads, and often different from each other. What is it that determines the form a poem will take? Illustrate your answer by using a poem you have studied, and showing how it differs from a ballad.

or

3. Compare two poems you have read on the same subject, showing what it is that has made them different.

4. Read "Ah, Are You Digging on my Grave," by Thomas Hardy, p. 380. Write a few sentences explaining the comment upon human nature you think the poet is making through the poem.